

# VIDEO POKER GAME WITH BONUS AWARD FOR MATCHING DESIGNATED HANDS

## Cross-reference to Related Application

This application is based on and claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application Serial No. 60/223579, filed August 7, 2000.

This application relates to a method of playing video poker and more particularly to a method of playing video poker in which the player must match one or more particular predetermined playing cards or poker hand rankings during the play of the regular video poker game. This is done by tracking the cards dealt on the initial five card hand until the particular playing card or cards or video poker hand or hands is achieved. This feature is played in conjunction with regular video poker over a series of video poker hands and the player is awarded a bonus payout when he achieves the cards necessary to win the bonus award.

## Background of the Invention

A well known game of chance offered to players in most gaming casinos is video draw poker. After making a wager, the player is dealt five cards face up. The player selects which cards, if any, the player wishes to hold, the unheld cards are discarded and replacement cards are dealt for the discarded cards. The final five card hand is analyzed to determine its poker hand ranking and the player is paid for winning poker hand rankings based on the amount of the player's wager. A pay table is displayed to the player showing the amounts that the player can win based on the poker hand ranking achieved by the player and the amount wagered by the player.

Bonus game features have also been added to video poker. In one known bonus game, video poker is combined with a game of bingo. A bingo card is shown in a video screen display adjacent to the video screen on which the regular game of video poker is played. Each of the spots on the bingo card is designated as a particular poker hand ranking, such as Four Aces, a Pair of Jacks, a Spade Flush, etc. and the center spot is a Free Space as is traditional in bingo. Whenever the player achieves one of the designated poker hand rankings as a

1 final hand during the play of the regular video poker game,  
2 the corresponding spot on the bingo card is marked -- such as  
3 by highlighting the spot. When the player achieves a winning  
4 play on the bingo card (such as completing a row, column,  
5 diagonal or the four corners), the player wins a bonus award.

6 The spots that comprise the winning arrangement are unmarked  
7 -- such as by unhighlighting the spots -- and the bonus  
8 feature continues with the other highlighted spots carrying  
9 over.

10 There is a need in the gaming industry to provide new and  
11 exciting games for the players to maintain interest in casino  
12 gaming. It is an object of the present invention to provide  
13 players with a bonus feature that is played in conjunction  
14 with a regular video poker game so that the player has the  
15 chance to win a bonus payout award during the course of play  
16 of video poker.

17 It is a feature of the present invention to initially  
18 designate one or more playing cards, either as simply a group  
19 of cards or as recognizable poker hands, and the designated  
20 cards are displayed to the player. As the playing cards are  
21 dealt to the player during the play of regular video poker,  
22 each dealt card that corresponds to one of the designated

1 cards results in a match of the designated card and the match  
2 is shown by highlighting the designated card that has been  
3 matched. When the player has matched all of the designated  
4 cards, the player receives a bonus award.

5 It is an advantage of the present invention that the  
6 player will receive additional payouts based on the length of  
7 time that the player plays the gaming machine. This will  
8 encourage the player to play the gaming machine for a longer  
9 time and add an additional entertainment feature to the gaming  
10 machine. This also adds a form of entertainment to the game  
11 of video poker since the player will have a rooting interest  
12 watching the designated cards being matched over the course of  
13 the deal of the playing cards. The bonus feature does not  
14 affect the play of the regular video poker game.

15 Other objects, features and advantages of the present  
16 invention will become apparent from a consideration of the  
17 following detailed description.

18

## 19 **Summary of the Invention**

20 During the play of a session of video poker, one or more  
21 playing cards, either as simply a group of cards or as

1 recognizable poker hands, are designated and shown to the  
2 player on the video screen of the gaming machine. As the  
3 playing cards are dealt to the player during the play of the  
4 regular video poker game, each dealt card that corresponds to  
5 one of the designated cards results in a match of the desig-  
6 nated card. The designated card that has been matched is  
7 shown by highlighting the matched card on the video screen.  
8 When the player has matched all of the designated cards, the  
9 player receives a bonus award. The amount of the bonus award  
10 is based on the number of deals of video poker that it took to  
11 match all of the designated cards.

12

13

### **Brief Description of the Drawings**

14 Figure 1 shows a gaming machine configured to operate the  
15 method of the present invention with the first initial deal of  
16 cards shown.

17 Figure 2 shows a gaming machine configured to operate the  
18 method of the present invention with the fifteenth initial  
19 deal of cards shown.

20 Figure 3 shows a gaming machine configured to operate the  
21 method of the present invention with the eighty-third initial

1 deal of cards shown.

2

### 3 Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments

4 The present invention adds a bonus feature to the method  
5 of play of conventional video poker. In conventional video  
6 poker, a player makes a wager to be able to play a hand of  
7 cards. After making the wager (which can be any number of  
8 coins, tokens or credits, but is usually a maximum wager of  
9 five credits), the player is dealt five cards face up. These  
10 first five cards are the player's initial hand or starting  
11 hand.

12 The player selects which cards, if any, the player wishes  
13 to hold from his initial hand. The unheld cards are discarded  
14 and replacement cards are dealt for the discarded cards. The  
15 final five card hand is analyzed to determine its poker hand  
16 ranking and the player is paid for winning poker hand rankings  
17 based on the amount of the player's wager. A pay table is  
18 displayed to the player showing the amounts that the player  
19 can win based on the poker hand ranking achieved by the player  
20 and the amount wagered by the player.

21 The feature of the present invention can be applied to

1 any video poker formats such as Draw Poker, Deuces Wild Poker,  
2 Bonus Poker, Double Bonus Poker, Double Double Bonus Poker,  
3 Triple Bonus Poker, Joker's Wild Poker or any of the myriad of  
4 video poker formats that have been developed. Each of these  
5 video poker formats uses various arrangements of poker hand  
6 rankings as winning combinations and they use various payout  
7 amounts for the poker hand rankings. The amounts paid for the  
8 various winning hand combinations in each of the video poker  
9 formats are calculated to provide a certain theoretical game  
10 return which is generally in excess of 90%.

11 Figure 1 shows a gaming machine upon which the method of  
12 the present invention can be carried out. The gaming machine  
13 10 includes a video screen display 20 on which is shown the  
14 playing cards that will be used during the play of the method  
15 of the present invention. The video screen display 20 also  
16 includes other information and data presented to the player to  
17 allow the player to understand the play of the game and to  
18 effect the operation of the method.

19 In the preferred embodiment of the present invention, the  
20 video screen display shows a credit meter 22 and a display of  
21 the total number of credits 24 wagered for a particular round  
22 of play of the game. The video screen display also has touch

1 screen locations to allow the player to DRAW 47 replacement  
 2 cards and to make his initial wager, which can be made one  
 3 credit at a time using the BET ONE location 26 or which can be  
 4 made by wagering the maximum number of credits allowed by the  
 5 gaming machine using the BET MAX location 28.

6 Each of the card locations on the video screen display  
 7 can also be touch screen locations so that the player may  
 8 designate which cards he wishes to hold by merely touching the  
 9 card location on the video screen display 20.

10 The gaming machine 10 also has a button panel 40 which  
 11 includes typical buttons that the player may press to activate  
 12 various actions during the play of the method of the present  
 13 invention. A CASH OUT button 41 is provided to allow the  
 14 player to collect any credits which the player has accrued on  
 15 the credit meter 22. A BET MAX button 42 and a BET ONE button  
 16 44 are provided to allow the player to wager either the  
 17 maximum amount of credits or to wager one credit at a time on  
 18 the play of the game as desired by the player. A DRAW button  
 19 46 is provided to allow the player to effect the draw step of  
 20 the method of play as desired should the player prefer to use  
 21 the button panel instead of the DRAW touch screen location 47  
 22 on the video screen display 20. A plurality of HOLD buttons



1 48 are also provided to allow the player to select which cards  
2 the player wishes to hold should the player prefer to use the  
3 button panel instead of the card touch screen locations on the  
4 video screen display 20.

5 In the preferred embodiment of the present invention,  
6 when the initial five card hand is displayed on the video  
7 screen display 20, the player must choose which cards to hold  
8 by either pressing the card location on the touch screen or by  
9 pressing the HOLD button associated with the card position.

10 The gaming machine 10 also includes a coin head 50 to  
11 allow the player to insert coins or gaming tokens as wagers to  
12 allow play of the gaming machine 10. A bill acceptor slot 52  
13 is also provided on the gaming machine 10. In order to accrue  
14 credits that may be used to play the gaming machine 10, the  
15 player inserts paper currency or other suitable script or  
16 gaming coupons into the bill acceptor slot 52 behind which, on  
17 the interior of the gaming machine, is mounted a bill acceptor  
18 which takes in and validates the currency. The monetary value  
19 of the inserted currency is then applied to the credit meter  
20 22, the credits on which the player may use to play the gaming  
21 machine.

22 The video screen display also includes a BONUS CARDS

1 location 60 at which the designated cards are shown. These  
2 are the cards that the player will attempt to match during the  
3 play of video poker in order to win the bonus award. A HANDS  
4 DEALT location 65 also tracks the number of hands dealt until  
5 the player has achieved a match of all of the designated  
6 cards.

7 Any other conventional and suitable equipment can be  
8 included in the gaming machine.

9 In the method of the present invention, one or more  
10 playing cards, either as simply a group of cards or as  
11 recognizable poker hands, are designated and shown to the  
12 player on the video screen of the gaming machine. Any  
13 suitable number of cards can be designated as the cards to be  
14 matched. The designated cards can be a recognizable poker  
15 hand, such as a Heart Royal Flush (which would be five cards),  
16 the four Aces and four Kings (which would be eight cards), or  
17 even all of the Spades (which would be thirteen cards).  
18 Alternatively, the designated cards can be a simply a subset  
19 of the entire fifty-two card deck -- say ten cards selected at  
20 random. Using a recognizable poker hand makes it easy for the  
21 player to know which cards he needs to be dealt in order to  
22 win the bonus award and thus makes it easy for the player to

1 root along while he plays the regular video poker game.

2 After the cards to be matched have been designated, the  
3 playing cards for the regular video poker game are dealt and  
4 displayed to the player. Each dealt card that corresponds to  
5 one of the designated cards results in a match of the design-  
6 nated card. The designated card that has been matched is  
7 shown by highlighting the matched card on the video screen.

8 An example of the method of play is shown in Figures 1-3.

9 In Figure 1, the BONUS CARDS location 60 shows that the cards  
10 designated are the Ace of Hearts, King of Hearts, Queen of  
11 Hearts, Jack of Hearts and Ten of Hearts (the Heart Royal  
12 Flush). The HANDS DEALT location 65 shows this as the first  
13 hand being dealt.

14 The initial five card hand dealt to the player in the  
15 regular video poker game is the Six of Spades, the Queen of  
16 Hearts, the Two of Diamonds, the Nine of Hearts and the Queen  
17 of Diamonds. There is one matching card of the initially  
18 dealt hand with the designated cards -- the Queen of Hearts.  
19 As shown in Figure 1, the Queen of Hearts is marked off in the  
20 BONUS CARD location 60 in any suitable manner, for example the  
21 Queen of Hearts can be highlighted to show that it has been  
22 matched.

1       The player then plays out his regular video poker hand in  
2   the conventional manner and winning final hands are paid and  
3   losing final hands are lost.

4       The player then continues to play video poker in the  
5   conventional manner with winning and losing plays being  
6   handled accordingly. Prior to the start of each hand of play,  
7   the cards are shuffled and an initial five card hand is dealt  
8   and displayed to the player. Whenever one of the designated  
9   cards is displayed to the player during the initial deal of  
10   the cards in the regular video poker game, the corresponding  
11   card is marked off in the BONUS CARD location 60. Each  
12   initial deal of the cards increments the HANDS DEALT location  
13   65.

14       Continuing with the example, Figure 2 shows that on the  
15   15th deal of the initial cards, the player has been dealt the  
16   Seven of Hearts, the Four of Hearts, the Two of Diamonds, the  
17   Two of Clubs and the King of Hearts. The King of Hearts is a  
18   matching card so it is marked off and joins the Queen of  
19   Hearts as highlighted cards in the BONUS CARD location 60.  
20   The HANDS DEALT location 65 shows 15 as the number of hands  
21   dealt so far.

22       Again the play of the regular video poker game continues.

1 Eventually, all of the designated cards to be matched will  
2 have been dealt on the initial deal of the regular video poker  
3 game.

4 As shown in Figure 3, the player has been dealt on the  
5 83rd deal the Four of Spades, the Ace of Hearts, the Eight of  
6 Diamonds, the Five of Clubs and the Jack of Diamonds. Thus,  
7 the player has finally achieved all of the five Heart Royal  
8 Flush since all five of the designated cards have been marked  
9 off by highlighting in the BONUS CARD location 60. The player  
10 thus wins the bonus award for having matched all of the  
11 designated cards.

12 The bonus award won by the player can be determined by  
13 the number of HANDS DEALT it took for the player to match all  
14 of the designated cards. Any suitable payout scheme can be  
15 used for the bonus award.

16 In the preferred embodiment of the present invention, a  
17 pay table is determined that groups the number of HANDS DEALT  
18 based on the mathematical probability of achieving a match of  
19 the designated cards over a series of initial deals of five  
20 cards from a randomly shuffled deck of fifty-two cards. A  
21 representative pay table is shown in Table 1:

22

NUMBER OF HANDS DEALT	BONUS AWARD
1-5	500
6-12	25
13-75	0
76-99	300
100-129	1000
130 OR MORE	4000

TABLE 1.

With regard to the example shown in Figures 1-3, it took the player until the 83rd hand to complete the match of all of the designated cards, so the bonus award to the player would be 300 credits. The bonus award can be paid to the player in any suitable manner, such as merely adding the 300 credits to the credit meter 22.

Once the player has achieved the match of all the designated cards, the BONUS HAND location 60 resets all of the cards to the unhighlighted condition and the HANDS DEALT location 65 resets to zero. The bonus award feature thus resets to the beginning and the matching of designated cards

1 and counting of dealt hands begins anew.

2 In one embodiment of the present invention, the same  
 3 designated cards are used as the bonus award cards when the  
 4 game is reset. In another embodiment of the present inven-  
 5 tion, a different group of designated cards are used each time  
 6 the game resets. The designated cards can be randomly  
 7 selected each time the bonus award is reset, preferably from a  
 8 preselected collection of designated card groups -- e.g. each  
 9 of the four Royal Flushes (Spades, Hearts, Diamonds and Clubs)  
 10 can form the preselected collection and one of these Royal  
 11 Flushes is randomly selected to be the designated cards each  
 12 time the bonus award feature is reset.

13 The pay table shown in Table 1 is only representative of  
 14 any of a myriad of pay tables that can be used. This pay  
 15 table is also based on the assumption that the player is not  
 16 required to make an additional wager to be eligible for this  
 17 bonus award feature. In another embodiment of the present  
 18 invention, the player can be required to make a separate wager  
 19 of any suitable amount, say one credit, to be eligible for the  
 20 bonus award and the moneys generated by this separate wager  
 21 can be used to fund the bonus award pay table. This would  
 22 allow much higher bonus awards to be paid to the player.

1           In the example shown in Figures 1-3, the designated cards  
2   to be matched were five in number. If a different number of  
3   cards were used as the group of designated cards, then the pay  
4   table would have to be adjusted to reflect the change in  
5   probability that occurs when the group of designated cards was  
6   more or less than five cards.

7           It is also possible to practice the method of the present  
8   invention using a deck of cards that has one or more Jokers  
9   added thereto. In such a situation, it would be necessary to  
10   adjust the pay table to reflect the change in probability that  
11   occurs when the deck of playing cards has more than fifty-two  
12   cards.

13          While the invention has been illustrated with respect to  
14   several specific embodiments thereof, these embodiments should  
15   be considered as illustrative rather than limiting. Various  
16   modifications and additions may be made and will be apparent  
17   to those skilled in the art. Accordingly, the invention  
18   should not be limited by the foregoing description, but rather  
19   should be defined only by the following claims.